Establishment of Thrift Fund for handloom weavers in Gujarat

1895. SHRI AHMED PATEL: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether any Thrift Fund has been established in Gujarat for the handloom weavers;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the number of weavers being presently covered by the fund in the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAY KUMAR): (a) to (c) The Government of India has been implementing the Thrift Fund Scheme since 1985-86 as a social welfare measure. The scheme envisages creation of a type of provident fund with contribution from the weavers for facilitating them to meet expenses towards children's education, medical expenses of family members and expenses in connection with marriage and other religious ceremonies. The contribution under this scheme is being shared @8% of the wages earned by the weaver and 4% each by the Central and the State Governments. This scheme is implemented in the country including in the State of Gujarat. During 2000-01, 3171 weavers of Gujarat have been covered under this scheme.

Textiles Minister's visit to foreign countries

1896. SHRI P.N. SIVA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the countries which have been visited by him during the last two years;

(b) the purposes for which these countries were visited: and

(c) the amount which was spent on these visits and the details of benefits accrued to the country on these visits, visit-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAY KUMAR): (a) During the last

two years, the Minister of Textiles undertook visits to Brazil and USA from 9th to 15th February, 2000 and to Australia from 5th to 11th November, 2000.

(b) The visits to Brazil, USA and Australia were undertaken to discuss the anti-dumping duty imposed by Brazilian Government on Jute Products, discuss USA authorities the issue of inclusion of Indian Food Grade Jute Packaging in the agenda of International Coffee and Coco Associations, and enhancement and promotion of wool trade between India and Australia to promote bilateral ties in the transfer of technology for wool development respectively.

(c) The total expenditure incurred for the visit to Brazil & USA was Rs. 4,22,446/- and the expenditure incurred for the visit to Australia was Rs. 1,81,821/-. The achievements of these visits were respectively the following:—

(i) The Brazilian Authorities agreed to reconsider the issue of imposition of anti-dumping duty on the Jute Products.

(ii) The discussion with USA authorities helped inclusion of the item regarding Indian Food Grade Jute Packaging in the agenda of the two Associations.

(iii) The visit to Australia helped to enhance woollen trade and improved bilateral ties in the field of transfer of technology for development of woollen products between the two countries.

Providing textiles facilities to all

1897. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have fixed any target for providing textiles facilities to all in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of achievements made so far; and

(d) the steps taken by Government in this regard?